

Potent China Allows No Rumors About Xinjiang

——Notes by the investigation team dispatched by Shaanxi Patriotic Volunteers Association to Xinjiang to verify the implementation of the UN third-round universal and regular deliberation of China's human rights

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Prologue: Facts speak louder than words, and the say belongs to nobody else but the participants.

In December, 2021, Shaanxi Patriotic Volunteers Association was approved as a special consultant of Economic and Social Council, which claimed the special attention of the Association's administrative council. In accordance of the council's study and decision, the Association organized a professional volunteer team to study approaches to doing some practical work at the international level and playing a positive role in affairs related to the UN. Some volunteers mentioned that universal and regular deliberation, as a good mechanism for the UN Human Rights Council to promote human rights, is supported by the Human Rights Council and driven by its member countries. Under this mechanism, the Council conducts a comprehensive and equal appraisal of the human rights of 193 member countries every 4 years, providing an opportunity for each member to display their actions of improving domestic human rights and fulfilling international obligations as well as the challenges faced by each of them during the process. Since the first deliberation in April, 2008, all the 193 UN member countries have gone through 3 rounds of scrutiny. In 2024, the Council's working team in charge of universal and regular deliberation will scrutinize the human rights records of China for the 4th time. China will then deliver to the international community a report on its fulfillment of the special procedure for the third-round universal human rights scrutiny by the Council, on its implementation of all the suggestions put forward by Treaty-based Bodies, other UN entities, and other countries for China to improve human rights, and on its implementation of all the suggestions from the perspective of China's interested parties like human rights research institutes, regional organizations, civil and social societies.

Some ancients believed that knowledge gained from reading cannot equal knowledge gained from travelling. But in the real world, there are always places you cannot go in person, and there is

always life you cannot experience yourself. Meanwhile, the China-related information provided by some major western media is rife with prejudices and precepts. Particularly in recent years, due to the farce of “Concentration Camp in Xinjiang”, which was directed by some anti-China politicians in the US Congress, many politicians, media, think tanks, and NGOs in western countries kept creating troubles or rumours out of thin air to defame China. They deliberately ignored the common wishes of the 25 million Xinjiang locals of various ethnic groups, and they hated to accept the basic facts of Xinjiang’s fruitful economic development, peaceful and satisfactory environment for work and living, and steady social progress over the past decades. Instead, they racked their brains to fabricate and spread shocking and ridiculous rumors through newspapers, magazines and TV, such as the so-called “Forced Workers”, “Blood-stained Cotton”, “Women Suffering Rapes or Rapes by Turns”, “Feeding Abortion Pills”, and “Converting Students of Ethnic Minorities through the Scheme of Incorporating Them into Classes of Inland High Schools”. All such attempts deprived the western public of the right to know about the truth.

For that reason, we mobilized the Association’s volunteers to form a non-governmental public welfare investigation team and conducted a car-aided field investigation of Tumxuk, Kashgar, Aksu, Alear and many other places within a period of more than 20 days beginning from April 20, 2022 when we flew from Xi’an to Urumqi. We mainly interviewed some Uighurs who had ever studied in the vocational training center provided by the government and therefore obtained a lot of first-hand material and experienced in person the status quo of the local human rights, which helped us a lot in appraising the progress of China in protecting human rights since the Council’s third-round universal scrutiny and in offering reforming suggestions for the future development of China’s human rights. We sincerely hoped that we could use our field experience and knowledge to present to the world the facts and truth about Xinjiang and help the world understand the feelings and concerns of all ethnic minorities in Xinjiang after the upheaval.

I. The Story of Yule Tuzi, the Keeper of a Milky Tea Stall

Most outsiders tend to believe that Xinjiang is remote, isolated, inaccessible, backward, and inconvenient for speech communication between locals and non-locals. At the mention of Xinjiang, the places the general public can manage to name are no more than Urumqi, Kashgar, Ili, Turpan, Gramu, Aksu and Narati. But once you go to some less famous medium-sized cities like Alear and Tumxuk, you will find that your stereotype about Xinjiang cannot match your real discovery at all. So to speak, northern Xinjiang is rich with lush pastures, sweet melons and fruits, and boundless fragrant lavender, while southern Xinjiang abounds in fertile fields, endless seas of white cotton, tall and straight white poplars, and vigorous and vast diversiform-leaved poplar forests. The vitality and prosperity of southern Xinjiang's economy is far beyond your imagination. The first night we arrived in Tumxuk, we drove to Tangwangcheng Night Fair to seek and taste the local delicacies at the recommendation of a local friend. It was 11p.m. when we arrived there. It was not a weekend night, but both sides of the street were closely parked with cars of different types and sizes, with no vacant space left! The sidewalk was lined with more than 70 food stalls, emitting pervasive fragrance and drawing streams of foodies, bustling and noisy. What leaped into our eyes were all local specialties like saute spicy chicken, mutton kebabs, and other flavor grills from northern and southern Xinjiang. That sight could simply make one’s mouth water and glue him to the spot.



An appetizing scene: At 1:00 a.m., no parking space is available outside, and the night fair is still alive with noisy foodies and fragrance of delicacies.

It was in so remote a border area of China! It was at the moment of fighting against the severe pandemic! In the metropolis of Shanghai, all economic activities and normal life came to a pause, but the night fair in Xinjiang was so boisterous and melodious with happy eating, happy drinking, and happy singing. In the intoxicating spring evening, we were sitting in a colorful world, tasting grills and drinking beer. All the scenes seemed to be dreamlike, and we couldn't believe we were in Xinjiang, a region dubbed by western media as "A Great Open Prison", "A Place Full of Blood-stained Cotton", "A Region with Frequent Rapes or Rapes by Turns". Quite on the contrary, the local people could enjoy such a peaceful and satisfactory living and working environment, such a rich, colorful, auspicious, and pleasant life. Whenever a handful of rebels went to the street and raised the slogans for "human rights" and "independence", western politicians and media hoped to see the local public's fear for terrorist attack. That was more than ridiculous! Some Uighur proprietresses told us joyfully that every day their business could receive customers to full capacity and till after 3:00a.m.



Xinjiang locals are enjoying a peaceful and satisfactory environment for living and working, and leading a rich and colorful life.

At the night fair, we were acquainted with Yule Tuzi, popularly called "Sister Milky Tea". In Uighur, her name means "a girl as beautiful as a star", while the nickname of "Sister Milky Tea" exactly brings out its implication. She is endowed with a pointed nose, a pair of deep-sunken eyes,

a headful of cascade-like long hair, and a willowy figure, with the typical features of charming Uighur girls. Her hair, dyed blonde, enhances the charm of the indigenous vision. Probably by virtue of her prominence, her business is much better than “Mixue Bingcheng”, a similar stall not far from hers, and her income is accordingly considerable. Amazed at the great number of milky tea shops on just a small square, we couldn’t help exclaiming that the time lag of consumption trend between Xinjiang and inland areas is simply “zero”. To my greater amazement, Yule Tuzi could deftly use WeChat and Alipay to receive payment, even able to use Pinyin for input. She told us gleefully, “I studied in the vocational training center, and now I’m better at Pinyin.”

One more amazing point is that Yule Tuzi is a single mother having to support two daughters. The elder daughter is 12 and studies at a local junior middle school, and the younger one is 8 years old. The three of them live with her parents. She also has a sister and a brother, both younger than her. Her sister also has 2 kids, aged 10 and 3 respectively, and her brother has a son at the age of 2. Her father retired from a middle school and now raises a dozen of cows at home. Meanwhile, he helps her with the care of her daughters. Her brother and sister-in-law are busy with work, so they often take their son to the home of their parents, both for seeking care for the kid and for bringing happiness to the old couple. It’s a flat of one living room and two bedrooms. Though not very spacious, it is exceptionally boisterous and full of happy laughter and cheerful voices due to the presence of three children. Her father always has a face of sincere and simple smiles and looks like an honest cowherd despite his experience as a middle school teacher. He communicated with us in fluent Mandarin, with a heavy accent of Uighurs. Yule Tuzi herself spoke Mandarin only when she talked with us, and she told us all members of the three generations speak only Uighur in family communication.

They had lived in a house made of adobe before they moved into one of the rent-rent buildings in the city which were funded by some inland province or municipality. Now their life no longer depends on river water, latrine, and dried dung of cows or sheep. Living in the tall building, they can now enjoy the convenience of tap water, electric light, TV and gas. On their windowsills there is a full display of green and vibrant plants.

We asked Yule Tuzi, “Who took care of your daughters when you studied in the vocational training center? Were they sent to the inland?”

“Who said they were? It never happened!” she felt stunned and asked back.

She told us that during that period, her daughters still stayed at home to attend school and kindergarten, with the care of her parents and brother. At weekends, the center also provides bus service for the trainees to travel to and from their homes.

“How could my study affect the growth of my children? What could separate us? What could force me to send my children to the inland?”

“Well, have you ever heard that some kids were sent to the inland just because their parents studied in the center? ”

Yule Tuzi shook her head like a rattle and said, “No, no! I have never heard of that. None of us women trainees went to study with husbands. For any couple, only one of them went. As far as I know, the government even stood out to play a coordinating role and lend a helping hand whenever

any of us had a family trouble. The government helped us a lot in life and is very nice to us. What's their nonsense for? It's impossible, definitely impossible! I'm even thinking of going back for further learning."

We asked her, "After your graduation from the vocational training center, do you really have a sense of 'physical and mental ruin as well as a dried-up appearance'?"

"No, no!" she shook her head and replied. "After our graduation, the center still keeps informed of our development. There is an arrangement of regular visits to us to ask about our difficulties in life. If any of us meets difficulty in finding a job, the teachers of the center will try to coordinate and solve for us. It was after graduation that I started this milky tea shop, and the business is turning better day by day. The cows raised by my father can produce milk about 30kg each day, and the center actively helps us contact and find marketing channels. At nights we often go to the square to entertain ourselves with the Uighur dance 'Maxirap'. If we do have a sense of 'physical and mental ruin as well as a dried-up appearance', can we be in the mood for square dance?"

As for the western media's sensational wording of "Contraception, Abortion, Sterilization Forced by the Authorities of Xinjiang", I asked her, "Did any governmental official intervene in your life when you were pregnant?"

"Who came to intervene? Was it necessary? Birth decision is made by ourselves. Who else would care about it except my parents?" she asked back in great surprise.

I told the family about another Uighur woman, who complained abroad to the local media in the name of a victim that she and her female compatriots were "forced to take unknown drugs to reduce or lose fertility". I also told them that the woman asserted that she had heard of many such cases.

After an exaggerated angry gesture, she cried, "Gosh! Who is she on earth? What's her identity? How could she tell such a lie, out of nothing? Isn't she humiliating us Uighur women? The management of the center is quite standard. I can assure you as a monitor. Whoever didn't feel herself received care from us classmates and the teachers. No matter who she was, we had a heart-to-heart talk with her, trying to know her trouble for sure. Anybody feeling uncomfortable was allowed a rest. Where can you find anything forced? "

"You see, some western media deliberately spread the so-called tearful complaint of a woman 'released from a concentration camp'. Allegedly, the woman complained as follows: 'We were forced to recite the sayings of Xi Jinping in the concentration camp. Those unable to recite were punished to wear clothes of different colors, which were separately used to indicate the times they failed in recitation. In addition, they were beaten, insulted, and starved! The experience of being starved to have sparks fly before eyes was literally horrific.'"

Yule Tuzi cut in, "That's sheer nonsense! Nobody in the center ever beat me. I never saw that happen. The food provided in our canteen was more than rich and enough. We could eat to our heart's content. The more we ate, the happier the headmaster and teachers were. When we met, they always asked us, 'Do you eat your fill?' Anybody found with no appetite for food or with less amount to eat was sure to receive the inquiry and care from the monitor and teachers. We asked about their health timely. What grounds do they have for claiming that we were starved?"

We made a cautious inquiry of her marital status, only to find that she gave us a straightforward and unreserved answer that she and her husband had long been divorced. No reason other than “incompatibility of temperament”. As is known to us all, Uighur women are virtuous, diligent, capable, thoughtful to family and filial to seniors.

With the development of economy and the improvement of their educational level over the past two decades, the social status of Uighur women has also improved. With less reliance on men, they begin to long for more equality and freedom, and their needs from husbands are naturally different from those in the past. The current divorce rate of Xinjiang ranks 3rd among all the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. According to the statistics issued by Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in March, 2019, the year 2018 witnessed the registration of 151,654 married couples and 43,879 divorced couples in Xinjiang, with the divorce rate amounting to 29%. It’s roughly the situation that every 2 marriage registrations were accompanied by 1 divorce case. In fact, Uighurs aged below 35 have begun to abandon the concept of “early marriage and early birth” held by their older generation due to the combined influence of universal education, multiple opportunities for seeking wealth, and increased costs of living. The results of the 6th national census shows that Xinjiang ranked 5th among 24 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions in terms of the percentage of people with higher education background. In southern Xinjiang, the policy of 14-year free education has been universally practised, and the program of 15-year free education in all parts of Xinjiang is being steadily promoted (namely 3 years for preschool education, 6 years for primary school education, 3 years for junior middle school education, and 3 years for senior middle school education). Universal education and more years spent on education result in the obvious delay of first-time marriage for the locals. A new ethos of pursuing free love and happy marriage has gone viral in Xinjiang.

We also interviewed another typical graduate from the vocational training center —Jehhan. Her parents both have 6-7 brothers and sisters, while she has only 2 brothers. The number of siblings in her generation is lower than that in the generation of her parents, but her generation lives far better than her parent contemporaries. She has now moved with her parents from the old dilapidated adobe house into a flat of more than 200m² under the government program of safe housing construction. By utilizing her courtyard, she provides catering and accommodation, and her father raises over 40 sheep. The living standard and life quality of the family are much better than ever before.

Jehhan was competent in sports in both senior middle school and college, particularly excelling at track and field. Up to now, she remains an able woman, shrewd, dauntless, resolute, chipper, and vigorous. Her hearty laughter can heard dozens of meters away. She is now 36 but remains single and childless. Nevertheless, she is very optimistic, extroverted, and full of passion for life and devotion to parents. When we arrived at her home, she happened to come back from hospital with her sick father. The gate was open, the yard and rooms looked neat and tidy, there was a long display of self-grown green plants, every detail suggesting her love and optimism for life.



Jehhan utilizes her courtyard to provide catering and accommodation. Everything is kept neat and tidy. The row of plants makes the room more vibrant and graceful.

Jehhan also studied in the vocational training center. After graduation from the center, she worked as the monitor of a company in the army, in command of nearly 100 soldiers. When asked about her criteria for a husband, she replied rather readily, “Nationality and age are not important, but ideally a college graduate like me? Otherwise, our outlooks on life, values, and the world might be different, and how can we live together?” When asked about the desirable number of children for her, she answered, “Probably 2?”

“I must have my children and I must help them go to college.”

We asked her, “Why not more children? Are you afraid of any birth limit?”

She felt astounded and asked back, “Afraid of birth limit? None of us locals wish to have many children!”

“Then any woman in your village was forced to receive abortion and implantation of birth control ring?”

She replied in great surprise, “No, no! I live here so many years, but I have never heard of that!”

We asked her, “Is it true that every night there was some trainee to be taken to a small dark room of the center and raped by men?”

She cried with an incredulous look, “My God! What’s wrong on earth? The management of our center is very normal and standard. How can that be true?”

We told her that it was out of the mouth of a Uighur woman, who went abroad and told the local journalist that she had done the special job of stripping the trainees before they were raped by men.

She made a helpless gesture and spread her palms, saying, “Just listen to her nonsense! Throughout the period I studied in the center, I didn’t see such cases at all, nor did I hear of such cases from other trainees. It’s awfully incredible.”

We interviewed an uncle named Burcourt, who was a keeper of more than 500 sheep and a father of three daughters and one son, aged 32, 26, 19, and 13 respectively. The elder two daughters have altogether 4 children, while his father had 9 brothers and sisters. It is evident that the idea of child birth has experienced a big change from generation to generation. Somewhat for fun, we asked his son about his planned age for marriage and planned number of children, but the boy blushed with shyness and kept shaking his hand, “No, no!” He told us his sole and long-cherished dream is to join the army, without the least wish for a wife at the moment. When he shifted to the topic of joining the army, his shyness disappeared from his face and his eyes immediately gleamed with

delight and desire. He confided to us he is now a major of medical apparatus and instruments at a technical secondary school in Kashgar, and is prepared to join the army after graduation this year. If his dream came true, his marriage and the arrival of his first baby might be greatly delayed, a far cry from his parents who had their first child before the age 20. That's also one of the reasons why the fertility rate of Xinjiang kept declining over the past decade. Even so, throughout the 2010s, the growth rate of Uighurs in Xinjiang was far above that of the Han Chinese in Xinjiang. According to the 2010-2018 demographic statistics of Xinjiang, the Uighur population increased by 2.5469 million from 10.1715 million to 12.7184 million, with a growth rate of 25.04%, while the population of the Han Chinese rose by only 176,900 from 8.8299 million to 9.0068 million, with an increase of 2.0%.

Indeed, we have no need to argue with Adrian Zenz on the exact plunge rate of Uyghurs' fertility in Xinjiang, nor do we have the need to argue with him on whether the plunge happened in 2018, or 2019 or 2020. Otherwise, we would fall into the pit prepared by the force behind him. After the Cold War, the United States and some other NATO countries kept launching aggressive wars on countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria, causing a death toll of over 300,000 and a refugee population of over 26,000,000. When did they care about the plunge rate of population in those countries? Has anyone in the United States or other NATO countries been held accountable for their war crimes and crimes against humanity? Quite on the contrary, the United States imposed sanction against the International Criminal Court for its investigation for the crimes of the US troops. President Trump even issued Muslim Ban to bar the Muslims of 7 countries from entering the territory of the US.

In America, racial discrimination is not only targeted at people from its hostile countries, but also practised in its own people. Even its staunch followers are discriminated by rank and status. According to a report by *The Lancet*, from 1980 to 2018, about 30,800 American citizens died from the violence of policemen, and among all the victims, the ratio of African Americans to white people was 3.5: 1. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, a politician-instigated wave of hatred and crimes against Asians has been sweeping across the United States frequently. The US roped in the UK and Australia to form AUKUS, an alliance exclusive to Anglo-Saxons and excluding all the countries of other language and other race. They even brazenly pocketed a business deal worth dozens of billions of US dollars which should otherwise be the fruit of France. There is no need to mention countries like Japan, which is only treated as a weird existence and a running dog despite its desperate ingratiating.

Facts prove that Xinjiang issue is never an issue of ethnic minorities, religion, and human rights; it is instead an issue of anti-separation, anti-terror and anti-interference. As was admitted by Lawrence Wilkerson, staff chief of former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, and a former colonel ever participating in the instigation of the Iraq War, the so-called "Uighur Issue" concocted by the US is nothing but an attempt to destabilize China from inside and a strategic plot to contain the development and emergence of China. The politicians of America and other NATO countries keep making an issue of human rights in Xinjiang and embargoing cotton and other products from Xinjiang at the excuse of "forced work" and "genocide". Their purpose is to utilize Xinjiang as a strategic pivot to contain and suppress China, to provoke civil strife in west China, and to frustrate the Belt and Road Initiative.

II. Inland High School Classes Admitting Minorities: A Gateway to Their Dreams or a Converter of Their Ethnic Identity?

Yule Tuzi's elder daughter, with a complete inheritance of her beauty, is now a pretty and graceful lass aged 12. When asked about the food quality in her school, she answered us sweetly, "Very good! A lot of delicacies!" At her reply, all of us interviewers, who had eaten dishes cooked in big pots during college years in inland cities, gazed at her incredulously. Anyhow, too few students will class their canteen food as delicacies. Noticing our suspicious look, the little girl felt upset, almost to the brink of tears. She added, "You uncles and aunts, why not believe me? Would you like to go with me to the school for a personal look?" Faced with her upset and serious tone, we promised to her that we would seek an opportunity to go to her school for a good taste. Instantly, sweet smiles reappeared on her face with a bit shyness. When we asked her whether she has a wish for a visit to inland areas, she immediately expressed her wish to finish her high school study in inland cities. She also told us many of her schoolmates wish to study in inland high schools in the future.

Western media have made various accusations of China's policies on Xinjiang, most of which are nonsense due to their ignorance of China's national conditions. For instance, they made a shocking accusation of the "Xinjiang Class" policy by rumoring, "Uighur children, no matter whether their parents are detained or not, need to be transported to China's inland areas to live in the environment of the Han culture, and the number of such Uighur kids has already amounted to 500,000!" Such groundless accusations reveal some western NGOs' idiosyncrasy for making trouble out of nothing. Such accusations are not totally incomprehensible. Some members of western NGOs are poorly qualified, not only blind and deaf to realities, but also haughty and self-conceited. They don't have their independent thinking, and their only competence is their echo of the hearsay from media. What they are accusing here is "classes opened in China's inland cities for high school students of Xinjiang and Tibet" (hereinafter called inland high school classes). Such classes are the outcome of a strategic cross-cultural and cross-region educational partnership which was established after 2000 for the sake of implementing China's strategy of West China Development, eliminating poverty and regional gap, helping Xinjiang through educational programs, and accelerating the training of minority talents. Thanks to this program, junior middle school students of Xinjiang, if able to pass the unified examination in their graduation year, can have the opportunity to go on with their high school studies in its inland supportive provinces where they are incorporated into classes of local students. It is a program to utilize the economic and educational advantages and resources of developed regions to speed up the improvement of Xinjiang's educational quality for students of all ethnic groups. There are also Xinjiang teachers dispatched to inland provinces together with the selected students, who take care of the daily life of the students like their parents while they are away from home for the first time. This is an undertaking only realizable in the socialist country of China, with the double support of the national policy and local governments. It is a testimony to the superiority of socialism. Since 2000, 66 Xinjiang classes have been opened in 36 China's inland cities including Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xi'an, Zhengzhou, Shenyang, and Fuzhou. Up to now, inland high school classes have turned out thousands of excellent graduates of Xinjiang origin, and most of them have become the mainstay and backbone of various sectors. What on earth is suggestive of "brainwashing"?

What the western rumormongers are totally ignorant of is that such classes are mostly opened in inland key high schools, which boast a superb faculty. More importantly, Xinjiang students in such classes can sit college entrance examinations in coastal cities and meanwhile enjoy a lower minimum passing score according to the favorable policy for ethnic minorities. Therefore, their chance of being admitted to Tsinghua University, Peking University and other national key universities listed into Project 985 is greatly improved. About 80% of them can be admitted as the first batch of undergraduates, and about 40% can be admitted into key universities listed into Project 211. As long as the students are somewhat diligent in studies, all of them can be admitted as undergraduates. In addition, their dormitories are not second to those of colleges. According to our findings, every 4-6 students share a room with an independent bathroom, and an electric fan or air conditioner. The food quality is also very good, with full consideration for the dietary habits of ethnic minorities. At the Corban Festival or on Meatz Day, the schools will organize festive activities to attract students of both the Han nationality and Xinjiang origin to spend happy time together. All this vividly shows China attaches great importance to the care and protection of adolescents of ethnic minorities. Therefore, inland high school classes constitute an earnest ideal for many Xinjiang native students. Though many families in big cities like Urumqi, Hotan, and Changji are well-off enough to afford a handsome investment for the education of their children, but the cost of education is still somewhat unaffordable for ordinary families in poor areas of Xinjiang, especially for the poor families with three children or more. For Xinjiang students themselves, gaining entrance to inland high school classes means gaining entrance to key high schools. Moreover, they are exempt from tuition and costs of accommodation and food. For many unwealthy families in Xinjiang, this program is doubtless an enticing approach for their children to change their fate through education and to enjoy the good educational resources in inland areas. Therefore in Xinjiang, school-age children of all ethnic groups earnestly wish to be admitted to inland high school classes and the competition among themselves is very fierce. Many adolescent interviewees told us that their great goal in junior middle school study is to gain entrance to inland high school classes. Ridiculously, the children's desire for study and for realizing personal ambitions was defamed by western anti-China forces as a forced choice to be converted by the Han nationality. Aren't the western politicians spreading the fallacy that the right way of keeping the cultural tradition of Xinjiang is to isolate the local children from modern schools and confine them to pasture to herd sheep every day? Can anybody still remember the year when politicians like George Walker Bush and Blair made a great fanfare of "The Greater Middle East Democracy Project", which promised to deliver an opportunity for children of Muslim countries to receive modern education, to empower the local people with the concept of "democracy", and to help them keep far from religionism? Now the Project has been ditched into the dust heap of history, and the western politicians and NGOs can find nowhere to vent their anger but to target their spear at Xinjiang. Their logic is: If I fail, you must fail, too! That's the real intention of western anti-China forces. Unreasonably, they didn't question why the US and other NATO countries didn't build and mosques for the local people and madrasahs for the teaching of the native languages in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria, and why they must force the refugees from these countries to learn their languages and accept their assimilation.

Before we bade farewell to Yule Tuzi, she repeatedly urged us to stay for supper. We felt quite moved by her hospitality and sincerity, but we had to depart and drive for the next destination.

On the moment of leaving, we asked her daughter, "Which is more delicious, the food provided

by your school canteen or the dishes cooked by your mother?”

The little girl blinked with our tricky question and said, “Both! They are just different! But my favorite is the pancake prepared by my mom! Every weekend, I take a lot back to the school.”

We asked about her ideal job in the future, and she told us expectantly that she wished to be a policewoman.

Before our departure, we advised Yule Tuzi to go back to the vocational training center to open a course on the preparation of milky tea so that more local women can learn a living skill for their future. She accepted our advice with a laughter, a hearty laughter filling the air again from inside the window.

III. Saleken Achieving a Wealthy Life Through His Own Hands

We came across Saleken at a restaurant in Tumxuk at lunchtime, who is handsome, strong, simple, and sensible, a standard young Uighur with evident pectorales and bicipital arm muscles shown from inside his T-shirt. Born in 1997, Saleken is now 25 and also the eldest son of his family. He and his three siblings all live with his parents and grandparents. His family has a tradition of specializing in cooking pilaf for four generations and their pilaf restaurant is well-known far and near. Considering we were visitors from afar, he cordially and earnestly invited us to go to his restaurant for a taste of his pilaf. His sincerity and hospitality, exactly characteristic of all the Uighur compatriots we had met in different places of Xinjiang the other days, let us feel a wealth of simple and sincere ethnic closeness.

Saleken’s grandfather had some schooling and therefore is known as an educated man in his village. Edified by his grandfather, Saleken and his siblings are all good at study. The elder of his sisters is a medical undergraduate in internship, his brother is a high school student in Urumqi, and his 11-year-old sister is still a primary school student. About 10 Uighurs, aged 25-60, received our random interview in their homes. Almost each of them has 3-4 siblings, or 6 at most, in contrast to their parents who usually have 5-9 siblings. Saleken’s father has 5 siblings, and the six of them have altogether 25 children. His mother also have 5 siblings, and they have altogether 14 children. From these figures, we can see the change of Xinjiang locals’ idea of marriage and fertility rate with the development of time and society.

Saleken had a family of considerable wealth. Unfortunately, an unexpected big fire in 2015 reduced all the cotton his father transported for sale to ashes, bringing them a loss of 400,000 *yuan*. All their property was used for compensation and even their cows and sheep had to be sold to repay the loan. The family was plunged into despair. Under such circumstances, Saleken gave up his dream for college study and left the opportunity for the elder of his sisters. He chose to help his parents grow cotton in their fields. Just in one year, they rose out of the depth of misfortune and began to have some savings. Thereupon, his father went back to his former profession and started a pilaf restaurant. However, as a boy interested in study since childhood, Saleken didn’t really give up his pursuit for knowledge. Egged on by some old people in his village, he attended an underground rural scripture class, which poisoned his mind and gradually turned him into an extremist as a result of frequent exposure to the wild interpretation of the Koran by some professed imams. I myself have heard of such professed imams. They have a smattering of knowledge about the Koran, or even

without the least knowledge at all, but they peddle their sermon everywhere, bringing harm to their audience like quacks. Such random and deviant interpretation is nothing but a rebellion against orthodoxy, which is disallowed in any religious country. In all Muslim countries, the selection and ordination of an imam in every mosque must go through a strict procedure, which requires qualifications of the candidate such as a formal education, a comprehensive mastery of Islamic knowledge, and a certain authoritative post in the mosque. It has a great bearing on the significant issue of whether the believers can be guided onto the right path. Even Austria amended its sharia enacted in 1912, with definite stipulations on the doctrine of Islam and the training, employment, and dismissal of Muslim clergy. There are many churches in Western countries, but none of them allow an untrained or improperly ordained priest or pastor to step onto the altar to preach. Ironically, they treat the rebels against orthodox religions in their own countries as heretics, but they name the genuine “wry-mouthed monks” and heresy fanatics of their hostile countries “pursuers of belief freedom” and “human rights fighters”. Freedom House, an NGO sponsored by the American government, made a distorted statement in “Islam: Religious Freedom in China” in 2017: “Many Uighurs have chosen to secretly circumvent official controls, access unapproved religious publications, privately affirm their faith, or refuse to participate in official celebrations.” But such means of “spreading religion” cannot be allowed in any country, no different from the truth that quacks cannot be granted a medical license or allowed prescription right.

Saleken studied in the vocational training center for only 7 months, where he mainly learned welding and Mandarin. He was warm-hearted, always volunteering to help underachievers and even illiterate trainees learn Mandarin and law and carefully explain to them difficult points in Uighur. On weekends, all trainees returned home for a good rest, and he was sure to go back to visit his paternal and maternal grandpas, help his parents with the chores in their restaurant, and patiently tutor his siblings in their studies. After graduation from the center, he totally abandoned religious extremism. More laudably, his intelligence and diligence helped him improve his Mandarin rapidly and master the skill of welding. After graduation, he passed the examination for a technical certificate, which is hard to obtain locally. Hence, he quickly found a job in a construction site and could earn a monthly income of 12,000 *yuan*, enabling him to be one of the top 10% of the local high-income population.

Saleken got married in December, 2012. The wedding was held in the city, costing 200,000 *yuan*, all covered by himself, not a single cent paid by his family. He told us emotionally that hadn't he learnt Mandarin and welding in the center, he couldn't have realized financial independence and held the decent wedding. However, Saleken is studious and ambitious, not content with his current life. When the chat shifted to his longing for the future, his eyes gleamed with hope. As he told us, he is now spending his spare time on the major of finance and accounting of the adult self-examination program of Tarim University, with the plan to pass the examination for accounting certificate which may help him increase his income and also the plan to buy a commodity apartment in the center of the city by the end of this year....

When asked about his ideal number of children, he answered us briskly, “One child first. As for the second, it's a question to consider when the first reaches 7, the age for starters of primary school.”

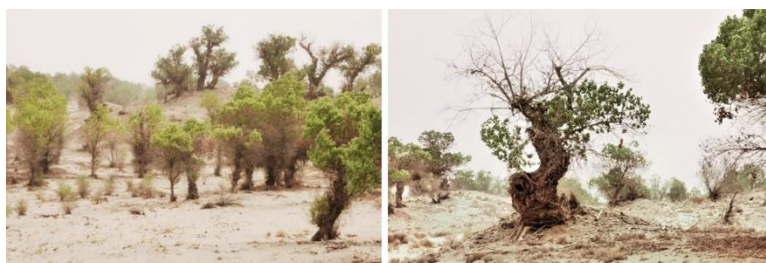
“Just one at first?”

Noticing our surprised expression, he explained, “Locals of my generation are much different from the generation of my parents. In the past, Uighurs seemed to have nothing to care about children but to give them a life, but we no longer hope to bring up our children in the way of our parents. We must give them a better education!” Many other interviewees of our Uighur compatriots expressed a similar idea as follows: In the past, Uighur parents had nothing to care but to build a separate room for each of their children before their adulthood, while with the social and economic development and ferocity of competition, parents must face the economic pressure imposed by the necessity of providing children a good education and the increasing cost of life. Their conceptual change is connected with social and economic development, and their idea in this regard is no different from that of the people in inland areas and even in big cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. But the very simple fact is taken by Western media as the result of “genocide” in Xinjiang! It’s really a case of “Accusing words can never be exhausted as long as you have a mind to incriminate your hate.”

Saleken bases his personal dream firmly on the trend of the times. His story proves a Western popular saying, “We must not lie down and cry ‘God help us!’.” Unquestionably, he is just one of the Uighur compatriots who have changed their fate thanks to the education received in the center. Anyhow, aren’t we told that a field investigation in sociology needs to select some representative example to help people recognize the whole through parts, understand mickle through little, and perceive the world through a drop of water?

IV. Maxirap: The Lively Uighur Entertainment by the Tarim River

We drove along the periphery of the Taklimakan desert frantically for the destination of the Maigaiti Village, where maxirap, a Uighur mass square entertainment in the form of songs and dances, was being held in the name of the Chinese pop singer Dao Lang. Along both sides of the desert highway stand the woods of deep-rooted, leafy and sturdy diversiform-leaved poplars. As the only arbores serving as the sandbreak in the desert, they are remarkably capable of enduring droughts, resisting sandstorms, and tolerating saline-alkaline. They are either old and strong or young and graceful, with twisted roots and gnarled branches, erecting in the desert stubbornly and heroically. Under the double attack of the scorching sun and sandstorm, they are also able to endure a temperature difference of 80°C day and night. Their heroic bearing and vigorous look brought us not only a visual impact but also a mental shock.



As the only arbores in the desert, diversiform-leaved poplars are deep-rooted and coiled, leafy and sturdy, with twisted roots and gnarled branches, erecting in the desert stubbornly and heroically, and bringing people not only a visual impact but also a mental shock.

To our greater surprise and excitement, not far off the woods of diversiform-leaved poplars we

came to the Tarim River, whose circuitous and rapid flow enhanced the vitality of both banks. We sat in the car listening to Krym's song "Tarim", which remains popular since the 1980s. Many of its listeners have turned from youngsters to seniors, but the Tarim River in their mind remains constant.

When we reached the cultural square of the Maigaiti Village, the villagers had long been attracted there by the music. On hearing the music and drumbeats of maxirap, Uighurs of both sexes and all ages couldn't help setting in motion their feet and waists just like being equipped with springs, all wearing a look of festive happiness in singing and dancing.

In the Uighur culture, maxirap is a significant community gathering, providing a great platform or space for the display of traditional folk songs, dances and other forms of culture. Its prominent feature lies in no distinction between performers and spectators, involving everybody at present in the entertainment. Maxirap is short in libretto and mirthful in rhythm, and the liveliness of the dance increases with the acceleration of drumbeats, which is a cogent expression of the positiveness, optimism, friendliness, and humor of Uighurs.

The history of maxirap can be traced back to the 9th century, namely the period of Uighur Khaganate in the Орхон Valley when Uighurs migrated from Mobei to the western oasis for a settled farming. For the celebration of victories or worship of Heaven, Earth and ancestors, Uighurs of that period would mostly sing and dance or chant poems in praise of heroes. Such a festive occasion set no limit on attendance and time, often all through the night and for several days running. With the improvement of people's living standard after the reform and opening up, maxirap has developed from a community gathering into a square gala, serving as a brilliant card for the promotion of Xinjiang's tourism industry. For a better inheritance of this time-honored art of mass entertainment, maxirap was listed as an intangible cultural heritage by the United Nations in 2010.

But maxirap also falls victim to the Western anti-China politicians and media's accusation and slander of Xinjiang, which reads, "Maxirap is treated as an illegal religious gathering by the authorities of Xinjiang. Unauthorized organization of the gathering is disallowed and college students are forbidden to participate in it." Some Western unaccomplished "scholars" such as Rachel Harris, a lecturer in Ethnomusicology, SOAS, University of London, gave play to their vulgar imagination and accused, "In the name of protecting Uighur cultural heritage, the Chinese authorities is in effect turning the Uighur folk customs into an official campaign, for the sake of propagating official political ideas and helping the authorities with suppression. Hence, the nature of mass activities is deprived and the locals' freedom of gathering and voice expression is denied and destroyed as an intention of the state policy." "The Chinese government is linking intangible cultural heritages with its Belt and Road Initiative, measures including popularization of mandarin at schools, relocation of Uighur communities, space vacation for project development, and restriction of religious and unofficial gatherings." But such ignorant, shameless, and rascally lies immediately reveal their flimsiness against the boisterous and joyous drumbeats and music, just like a few decadent yellow leaves falling into a rushing river, which are sure to be rendered traceless by the rapids.

Among the singing and dancing crowd intoxicated in maxirap, Uighurs are always the most conspicuous participants, who, despite gender and age, like to wear brilliant and gorgeous costumes of red, green, and golden yellow. Girls like to wear red, green, or purple dresses made of Aldrich silk, while women of mother age prefer to wear blue, black or blackish green overskirts patterned

with clustered or scattered flowers and made of silk, satin, or cloth. Men of father or grandfather age are not in the least second to their opposite sex in attire. All of them are dressed in white front-open Kuyneck (shirts), red Yakitac (long coats) or Toni (robes), Parsimet (short jackets), Nimucha (coats), waist scarfs, etc. In addition, there must be golden lace embroidered on the shirt and robe, and a four-edged decorative cap on the head. Some of the men even wear a tuft of dashing and amusing moustache. That's the biggest difference between Uighurs and their inland compatriots of the Han nationality. The ethnic costumes with so distinct and rich regional characteristics and flavor are well indicative of Uyghurs' beauty, physique and aesthetics. They are an important symbol of the traditional Uighur culture as well as an important characteristic of their ethnic identity.



Maxirap

At the scene of maxirap we visited, we noticed in particular the costume of a Uighur lady named Gulibostan, who attracted the public attention for her lithe and graceful figure dressed in a brilliant red dress and a long waistcoat with alternate colors of yellow and green. Beyond our imagination, she told us that years before she had been blinded and bewitched by religious extremists and urged other women villagers to wear a burqa in public places. She had hardly realized that she was violating Regulations on Religious Affairs of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which clearly states in Article 38: “No organization or individual may propagate religious extremist ideas..., play up religious fanaticism, spread religious extremism through appearance, costume, signs, logos, etc., coerce or force others to wear costumes, signs and logos expressing religious extremism.”

To be frank, people like Gulibostan are not few and far between in Xinjiang. With the rapid improvement of public living standard over the past 20 years in the wave of reform and opening up, more and more Muslims have the opportunity to go abroad, and up to now more than 30,000 Muslims have finished the hajj in Mecca, Saudi Arabia under the annual organization of 2000-3000 pilgrims by the Xinjiang government. That is a best proof of the openness of Xinjiang, the progress of the local religion, and the tolerance of the religious policy. Many of Gulibostan's neighbors and friends have also finished the hajj. Pitifully, that has also resulted in the penetration of Islamic fundamentalism of the Middle East and the prevalence of religious extremism in Xinjiang. Some foreign religious doctrines and canons have impacted the locals' daily affairs like food, clothing, housing, transportation, cultural festivals, marriages and funerals. For example, one tangible impact is the way of naming children and the ceremony of circumcision; in addition, both marriage and divorce ask for no legal registration but the way of saying “nika” or “talaq”. Under the influence of religious extremist ideas, even singing and dancing were queerly prohibited at weddings in southern Xinjiang in the 2010s.

In those years, the pilgrims back from Mecca were the respectable envy of the public. But some of them were so possessed by Islamic extremism as to require all Uighur women to cover their heads

and faces with black gauze in public places and to wear burqas in street stroll and mosque worship, and require Uighur men to wear a beard and refrain from smoking and drinking. There must be 5 prayers each day and a fast month every year. Moreover, Islamic extremists also interfered in compulsory education and coaxed Uighur adolescents into dropping out and attending their underground scripture classes in the name of the Koran. Those doctrines imported stealthily from abroad are mixed with good and evil, and their truthfulness is hard to tell. The extremists themselves know for sure their doctrines are quite incongruous with orthodox Islamism and it's impossible for them to spread their doctrines in orthodox mosques. Therefore, they organize underground gatherings and scripture classes at home, or at grazing points remote from counties, townships, and villages, or even at hideouts in inland cities. Burcourt, the uncle we mentioned before had ever organized some Uighur minors to attend such scripture classes secretly opened in Guangzhou and hence violated Article 32 and Article 37 of Regulations on Religious Affairs of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, which respectively states: "No organization or individual may preach scriptures, deliver sermons, spread religions, or carry out other religion-related activities."; "No organization or individual may organize, allure and force minors to participate in religious activities."

When the Chinese government stepped in to curb the religious chaos, foreign separatists stirred up the masses and asserted that the Chinese government was undermining people's freedom of religious belief. In 2017, *Freedom House* published an article titled "Islam: Religious Freedom in China", which fabricated wild tales as follows:

"Like other religions in China, Islam has experienced a revival over the past decade. For many Uighurs, increased religiosity and adoption of religious symbols or attire are ways of asserting an independent identity from the Han Chinese majority..." "Many Uighurs, facing more restrictive conditions, have chosen to secretly circumvent official controls, access unapproved religious publications, privately affirm their faith, or refuse to participate in official celebrations. Others have acted more defiantly, growing beards or donning headscarves even where it is forbidden, or confronting police when they try to enforce intrusive regulations."

Such anti-China elements attempted to accuse China of the "crimes" of "suppressing" people's religious freedom through their illogical and broken Chinese, only to find they were brought into a self-dug pit because their reports as follows ironically prove the very fact that Islam is burgeoning in China. "According to the 1982 Central Committee Document No. 19 on CCP religious policy, there were 10 million Muslims in China. The figure has more than doubled since then." "Islam, with about 21 million believers in China, has experienced visible expansion over the past decade." "China is home to over 35,000 mosques, half of them in Xinjiang, and 45,000 imams dispersed across multiple provinces. There are important pilgrimage sites in Kashgar and Turpan in Xinjiang, as well as in Gansu Province's Linxia, a heavily Hui Muslim city that is often referred to as 'Little Mecca'." Now that Freedom House acknowledged that Islam has experienced a revival over the past decade, could the revival materialize in a desolate unpeopled area and couldn't it be the outcome of the Chinese government's effort to protect religious freedom? Can the total number of mosques in the handful of "human rights instructors" of the EU amount to 35,000?

As is not unusual to the public, Freedom House always deliberately blames China for all bad things and praises America and European countries for all good things. But this time, it got a wrong script and received a severe slap on the face from the latest report titled "Combating

Islamophobic/Anti-Muslim Hatred and Eliminating Discrimination and Intolerance on the Grounds of Religion or Belief” and issued by Ahmed Shahid on February 22, 2021, a UN Human Rights Council special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief. The report blamed:

Around the world, at least 15 countries like Denmark, Norway, Holland, France, Austria, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Canada, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Gabon, and Sri Lanka have passed laws to restrict or prohibit Muslim women’s freedom to wear headscarves and Muslim men’s freedom to wear beard, “believing such religious attire and symbols are unfit for secular public places.” Their legal prohibitions on religious and workplace attire directly exclude Muslim women from certain professions. The courts of Denmark and France deny Muslims citizenship, claiming that the customs of Muslims are incompatible with “democratic values” like gender equality. France denies Muslim women citizenship simply because they wear burqas in application. Three other European countries deny Muslims citizenship due to the applicants’ unwillingness to shake hands with government representatives for their religious concern. The other four European countries deliver preferential treatment to Christian refugees, but openly deny help to Muslim refugees. In Australia, the authorities only receive Christian refugees from Syria but deny entrance to Muslim refugees from the same country. In Western countries, Muslim students receive hostile treatment for their attire, which result in the increasing rate of dropouts and the decline of their academic performance. In the United States, Muslim students suffer bullying for religious reason twice as often as students of other religions.

The UN report rebuked the above-mentioned Western countries professing to be “most respectful to human rights” for their discrimination policies on Muslim individuals and groups, which cause so huge a pressure to Muslims as to force them to conceal their religious features such as name, attire, diet, and activities and to receive “forced assimilation”. As far as we know, Muslim immigrants in Norway, in order to seek a job, have to shave off their long beard and moustache, keep their gauze kerchiefs in the closet, and change their Arabic names. For example, names like Ali, Muhammad, Rashid, Anwar are all replaced by Norwegian names like Harold, Daniel, Eric, Rebecca.... Otherwise, their applications for jobs will be directly removed into the recycle bin of the computer or thrown into a waste paper basket.

Western countries like to take themselves as human rights instructors and make deafening cries for belief freedom every day, but it is as hard as a sky reach to have new mosques built or have a good maintenance of existing mosques in their territory. The thresholds are very high and the requirements are extremely rigorous. Germany, France, Switzerland, and northern European countries provide shelters for millions of Muslim refugees, but prevent them from building mosques or minarets through laws and regulations on environmental protection, noise reduction, and traffic control. It is pointed out in the report of Shahid that in many Western countries, Muslims’ request for mosque erection often meets with the objection of the people whose voice is loudest in calling for the protection and respect of human rights in media. Slovakia has raised the number of signatures endorsing the registration of a mosque or a religious body from 20,000 to 50,000 — the reason behind it is that the population of adult Muslims in this country is less than 50,000. The law enforcement and intelligence officials of other Western countries exercise supervision over mosques and worshipers in the name of counter-terrorism. The authorities of France and Austria simply closed mosques and Muslim charities at the excuse of combating religious extremism.

According to the UN report, in the countries like the US, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Slovenia, and Australia, which are given to accusing other countries of trampling human rights, Muslims are gravely discriminated against in accessing goods and services in places including public transport stations, airports, executive offices, shops and hotels. More than 1/3 Muslims in the 15 member countries of the EU feel discrimination in seeking jobs.

In Western countries, the ethos of hatred and fear for Islam has ruined the social and economic prospect of Muslims, who account for a low percentage of the population engaged in advanced fields like politics, law, and medicine. Discrimination and prejudice have ruined the opportunity for young Muslims to change their fate through education. Compared with other races and believers of other religions, Muslims in Western countries have a greater chance of unemployment and receive a lower pay. They can only do some temporary, insecure, and low-income jobs. In the UK, Muslims are the most underprivileged religious people in economy, and their family poverty rate is 32% higher than the national average. In the UK, the unemployment rate of Muslim women is 71% higher than white/Christian women of the same educational level and language ability. Harsh living conditions and fear for deportation make Muslim immigrants more vulnerable to sexual abuse and other attacks against human rights. That's the status quo and real conditions of Muslims in the US and European countries which show "great concern for the human rights of Muslims in Xinjiang".

Our interview with Gulibostan was held in her home. Sitting in her courtyard where she provides catering and accommodation, we chatted with her and her husband over cups of tea. Under the grape trellis, the courtyard looked mottled in sunshine, with a tableful of sweet melons and fruits and inviting pancakes. Whiffs of tea fragrance kept rising out of the cups in our hands. Time in the courtyard seemed exceptionally soft and slow, with occasional bleats of sheep and cackles of hens. A private car was neatly parked in the yard, every corner of which oozed with an air of peace and prosperity, a languor of ease and contentment. Apparently, we were visiting a wealthy, harmonious and happy family.



Gulibostan and her husband run their courtyard to provide catering and accommodation, and now enjoy the convenience of their private car.

The couple have two sons. The elder one, aged 17, studies at a technical school in the city; the younger one, aged 11, is still a primary school student and lives at home. The husband is a cadre of a forestry management station, earning a monthly income of 2,800 *yuan* for only 15 working days and enjoying free time for the rest days. The elder son lives at school, with a handsome monthly allowance of 500 *yuan* from his loving parents, which is a rather high sum in terms of the local living standard. Thanks to the cotton-growing technology she learnt in the vocational training center and the farming machinery at home, she has been growing cotton in 4 hectares of fields (nearly 3/4 contracted from the village) with her husband, which brings them almost a net income of 22,500

yuan per hectare. They also raise 15 sheep, own a small shop, and provide catering for villagers in their courtyard, featuring saute spicy chicken, hand-pulled noodles, and kebabs. They can manage their cotton fields quite well with the help of only a few hired hands. Impressed by their handsome annual income from growing cotton, an increasing number of villagers choose to cancel contracts with them and also grow cotton on their retrieved fields. Only 30% of the villagers have no private car and farm machinery. Such a detail reveals to us the shocking absurdity and ridiculousness of Western media's fabrications like "Forced Workers", "500,000 People Enslaved to Grow Cotton" and "Blood-stained Cotton from Xinjiang".

When the topic shifted to children, we said to Gulibostan, "According to some Western media, if one of the parents goes to study in the vocational training center, their kids will be sent to the inland to accept the conversion of the Han nationality in education. So did your sons experience it during your study in the center?"

"Who said it? Both of my sons lived at home! With the care of my husband and my mom, why must I send them off? What's more, I returned to stay with them every weekend." asked back Gulibostan in great surprise.

"Then did you hear of any trainee raped in the center?" we asked.

"No! Impossible!" she answered.

"Didn't you see it or didn't you hear of it?"

"Neither, it's impossible!"

Burcourt and his wife are both professional farmers, each with a land grant of 35 *mu* from the local government, which they use to grow cotton with the help of hired hands. Every year, they can earn an income of over 100,000 *yuan* from cotton, and his time is mostly devoted to the herding of sheep and goats, more than 500 in total. The market price for a sheep or goat reaches 1,000-3,000 *yuan*. His wife will retire this year, with an expected pension of 2,000 *yuan*. By then, their pensions will add up to 5,000 *yuan*.

"When the pandemic dies out, I will take my wife out for a tour! I also wish my son could join the army and contribute to national defense!" Burcourt said with a simple and sincere smile.

With those words, he clasped his fingers with those of his wife, who smilingly nodded her approval as a response. What an envy to us witnesses!

Burcourt has 3 daughters and 1 son. The eldest daughter is married to an urban man and has 3 children. She and her husband run a breakfast shop and can earn 400-500 *yuan* every day. The second daughter works as a teacher in the city and has only 1 child. The third child is the son cherishing a lasting dream of joining the army, and the youngest daughter is still a high school student.



The sheep and goats raised by Burcourt add up to more than 500.

Basking in the happiness of a roomful of children and a stableful of cows, sheep, and goats, Burcourt and his wife smiled from ear to ear. They repeatedly urged us to taste their homemade yogurt, to eat the watermelon grown by themselves, and to see their hundreds of sheep and goats and their 2 cows. Xinjiang yogurt is different from its counterparts in other regions of China. The yogurt we tasted was made by Burcourt's wife, who went through all the process of disinfecting the fresh milk from their own cows through heating, adding some fermented milk to the disinfected milk after cooling it off, and then putting it in the shade for fermentation. It tasted sour, with a rich fragrance of milk felt both in the air and in the mouth. Burcourt stressed more than once that their home-made yogurt sold well at the price of 5 *yuan* per bowl. "Tasty, tasty! Please taste more!" He repeatedly requested us to remember to inform him of our next visit well in advance so that he could invite all his relatives and friends within miles around to share with us a roast whole sheep prepared by himself and give us a good treat for days on end. Their simplicity, kindness, and sincerity brought us the feeling of interpersonal warmth and heartiness which we hadn't experienced for long and couldn't forget in the long time to come.



The hospitality, simplicity, and heartiness of Uyghurs are sure to be felt by every visitor. Such a scene can be found

in almost every Uighur family, sure to leave an indelible memory for the visitor.

Although Gulibostan and Burcourt ever participated in illegal religious activities, they are not unfairly treated or excluded from the mainstream society as Muslims in Western countries. As a matter of fact, after they wound up their studies in the vocational training center, they freed themselves from blind belief in religious extremism and began to live a life of freedom, affluence, and happiness in its real sense under China's favorable and supportive policies on the development of Xinjiang.

Epilogue: “In my dream, you are being bathed in the glitter of stars.”

It's 4:00 a.m. when my pen moved here. But I couldn't help feeling emotional ups and downs and a myriad of thoughts when I recalled the expansiveness of Xinjiang, the vast desert, the coiled and sturdy diversiform-leaved poplars, and particularly the interviewees in our field investigation in Xinjiang who ever studied in the vocational training center. Through the study in the center, they freed themselves from religious extremism, and acquired mandarin, law, and other useful skills and knowledge, which has helped them greatly improve their living standard through self-reliance or government support after graduation. All the trainees we interviewed were full of gratitude and appreciation for the teachers in the center. The establish of vocational training school made a great success in maintaining the social stability of Xinjiang and preventing Muslims from being kidnapped and coerced by religious extremists and being dragged into the abyss of radicalism. This way accumulated special experience in seeking a Chinese path to the prevention of ethnic and religious conflicts. Everyone's contribution in this practice can never be covered up or deleted by Western countries through their deceptive and superficial words like “human rights” and “freedom”. Through the unremitting and indomitable efforts of the teachers and other forces, Xinjiang has made substantial achievements in its development. No violence cases and terrorist incidents occurred during the past 5 years, suggesting the effectiveness of violence and terror containment, the fruitfulness of eliminating extremists, and the obvious improvement of social security. Meanwhile, the economic and social development as well as the improvement of people's livelihood had also made unprecedented achievements and is turning for the better. Today, with the rise of China's comprehensive national power and international status, politicians of Western countries, in an attempt to obstruct and contain China, choose to ignore the prosperous development of Xinjiang and fabricate and spread groundless rumors like “Forced Workers in Xinjiang”, “Genocide/Cultural Deracination”, “Uighur Women Suffering Rapes or Rapes by Turns”. Their hysterical provocation of nationalist sentiments in the name of “human rights” is just aimed to achieve their purpose of “containing China through Xinjiang”. It is our conviction that no matter how hard those ill-intentioned politicians try to attack and smear China, people of all ethnics in Xinjiang, in step with the great journey of China's rejuvenation, are sure to share the fruits of China's reform, sure to live a more stable and harmonious life, a more peaceful and contented life!